MIOSHA Fact Sheet

Safety and Health Programs

A Safety and Health Program (SHP) is a systematic approach to managing safety and health activities by integrating occupational safety and health programs, policies, and objectives into organizational policies and procedures. Simply stated, a SHP is a set of safety and health program components that interact in an organized way. An effective SHP must be uniquely designed for each organization. It is not a "one size fits all."

An effective SHP consists of seven core elements that apply safety and health management practices of employers who have been successful in protecting the safety and health of their employees. An effective SHP depends on:

Management Leadership

Management provides the leadership, vision, and resources needed to implement an effective safety and health program. Management leadership means that business owners, managers, and supervisors are committed to make worker safety and health a core organizational value. Leaders need to be fully committed to eliminating hazards, protecting workers, and continuously improving workplace safety and health. Leaders should also provide sufficient resources to implement and maintain the safety and health program, as well as visibly demonstrate and communicate their safety and health commitment to workers and others. Good safety leaders always set an example through their own actions.

Worker Participation

To be effective, any safety and health program needs the meaningful participation of workers and their representatives. Workers have much to gain from a successful program and the most to lose if the program fails. They also often know the most about potential hazards associated with their jobs. Successful programs tap into this knowledge base.

Worker participation means that workers are involved in establishing, operating, evaluating, and improving the safety and health program. All workers at a worksite should participate, including those employed by contractors, subcontractors, and temporary staffing agencies.

Hazard Identification and Assessment

One of the root causes of workplace injuries, illnesses, and incidents is the failure to identify or recognize hazards that are present, or that could have been anticipated. A critical element of any effective safety and health program is a proactive, ongoing process to identify and assess workplace hazards.

Some hazards, such as housekeeping and tripping hazards, can and should be fixed as they are found. Fixing hazards on the spot emphasizes the importance of safety and health and takes advantage of a safety leadership opportunity.

Hazard Prevention and Control

Effective controls protect workers from workplace hazards; help avoid injuries, illnesses, and incidents; minimize or eliminate safety and health risks; and help employers provide workers with safe and healthful working conditions.

Education and Training

Education and training are important tools for informing workers and managers about workplace hazards and controls so they can work more safely and be more productive. Another role of education and training, however, is to provide workers and managers with a greater understanding of the safety and health program itself, so that they can contribute to its development and implementation.

LEO is an equal opportunity employer/program.

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Effective training and education can be provided outside a formal classroom setting. Peer-to-peer training, on-the-job training, and worksite demonstrations can be effective in conveying safety concepts, ensuring understanding of hazards and their controls, and promoting good work practices.

Program Evaluation and Improvement

Once a safety and health program is established, it should be evaluated initially to verify that it is being implemented as intended. After that, employers should periodically, and at least annually, step back and assess what is working and what is not, and whether the program is on track to achieve its goals. Whenever these assessments identify opportunities to improve the program, employers, managers, and supervisors—in coordination with workers—should adjust and monitor how well the program performs as a result. Sharing the results of monitoring and evaluation within the workplace, and celebrating successes, will help drive further improvement.

Communication and Coordination for Host Employers, Contractors, and Staffing Agencies

In today's economy, an increasing number of workers are assigned by staffing agencies to work at specific host worksites under the direction and control of the host employer. Examples include seasonal workers, such as delivery drivers and warehouse workers, who may be placed in both short and long-term assignments. In these situations, it is important for the staffing agency and the host employer to communicate and coordinate to provide and maintain a safe work environment for their workers.

In both temporary worker and multiemployer situations, safety is enhanced if employers establish mechanisms to coordinate their efforts and communicate effectively to afford all workers equal protection against hazards. These mechanisms include measures to ensure that all workers on site (and their representatives) can participate in preventing injuries and illnesses.

Why Implement a SHP?

A SHP adds value to the workplace! Every day, workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities cause immeasurable pain and suffering to employees and their families. Recent estimates indicate that work-related deaths and injuries cost our nation's businesses $171 billion per year in wasteful and often preventable expenses.

If your company wants to reduce accidents, injuries, illnesses, and their related costs, everyone must place as much emphasis on safety and health issues as they place on other core management issues. These include production, sales, and quality control. To be most effective, safety and health must be balanced with, and incorporated into, the other core business processes.

Companies that effectively manage their SHP will most likely have a positive safety culture and a high level of safety performance.

How can I get more information?

The **MIOSHA Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division** has consultants available to provide employers with assistance in creating safety and health programs and implementing long-term safety and health solutions. For free statewide assistance, companies can call the CET Division at **517-284-7720**, or **toll-free at 800-866-4674**, or visit our website at www.michigan.gov/miosha.

Several courses available from the MIOSHA Training Institute (MTI) can provide valuable information on this subject. To view the calendar of courses, go to www.michigan.gov/mioshatraining

Additional information is available at Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs